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## Desert Warfare

**Grueling Course Builds Small-Unit Tactics**



# Honoring Ike

## Why the Eisenhower Memorial Matters

By Bob Dole



Eisenhower Memorial Commission

It's a scene that occurs 365 days a year, in stifling summer heat and cold wind of winter. Some visitors are in wheelchairs. Others walk slowly, with canes or on the arm of a family member. Most are accompanied by adult children or grandchildren—members of the next generations, who listen intently to stories of war and remembrance.

They are our nation's World War II veterans. Each carries his or her own story as they visit the National World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. It is their memorial, dedicated in 2004 to honor the service and sacrifice of the 16 million people who served in the U.S. armed forces during World War II.

I am proud to have raised funds to build the World War II Memorial. At least once a week from April through November, I go there to welcome visiting veterans and thank them for their service. Like old friends, we reminisce about our wartime experiences and how they shaped our lives. They never boast, but you know they've seen it all: heroism and horror, and buddies who didn't make it home. Many returned to build happy, successful lives. Educated via the GI Bill, they found steady jobs and made good livings for themselves and their families. They achieved the American dream.

Inevitably, the conversation turns to Gen. Dwight D. "Ike" Eisenhower, our hero in both war and peace. He was the man who planned the brilliant D-Day invasion that turned the tide and helped bring the war in Europe to an end; the West Point-trained military leader who, as our country's 34th president, led our nation into an unprecedented era of peace, prosperity and technological superiority. In so many ways, the Greatest Generation who fought under Eisenhower, the general, flourished because of Eisenhower, the president.

Having served under him imparts a swell of pride like nothing else. We respected and revered him. Today, we remember him. Once, there were millions of us. Now, dwindling in number, we want to honor him in our lifetime.

It's been more than 70 years, and it is time for Eisenhower to finally receive the recognition he deserves as both a great American general and a visionary president.

I am extremely proud to be leading the team raising the funds in a public-private effort to build a memorial dedicated to Eisenhower. Honoring his legacy as both general and president, the National Eisenhower Memorial will stand in Eisenhower Square, an urban park at the base of Capitol Hill.

A diverse and powerful coalition has banded together to honor him. Our membership includes all former U.S. presidents and vice presidents as well as dozens of former Cabinet members and military service chiefs, including retired Gen. Colin Powell.

The coalition also includes more than 80 prominent business leaders, academics and spokespeople for the Greatest Generation, including TV journalist Tom Brokaw and actor Tom Hanks. We believe the Eisenhower Memorial matters. We are committed to ensuring that the dual legacy of Eisenhower—a brilliant leader in war, and an untiring champion of peace—endures, and that his story is not lost to the history books but will inspire generations to come.

I often say this is my last big challenge. Every week, I call key members of Congress to remind them it's time to fund the memorial so we World War II veterans will be around to see it. I hope that you, Eisenhower's Army comrades, will join me in this important effort. Let's bring both Democrats and Republicans in Congress together so we can all say, "We like Ike!"

For more information about the National Eisenhower Memorial, visit <http://www.eisenhowermemorial.gov>. ★

*Bob Dole, a Republican from Kansas, served in the U.S. Senate from 1969 to 1996. He was awarded two Purple Hearts and a Bronze Star for his Army service during World War II. He is the finance chair for the National Eisenhower Memorial.*